

# IS BOSTON'S MAYOR BOSSSED

**"Honey Fitz" Takes His Daughters With Him on Cross Country Trips and They Do Say as How It Helps Make Him a Good Mayor.**

A militant Mayor, indeed, is John F. Fitzgerald of Boston. When he is mayoring he is IT, and he doesn't care who knows it. He is the real boss on School street, Boston, and the city is well aware of that fact.

But when "Honey Fitz" is away on his periodical trips, either boosting Boston or recuperating at Palm Beach, he in turn is bossed, and not by any politicians or voters.

His rulers are his two pretty daughters, Rose and Agnes, who trail after him wherever he goes and make sure their mother's instructions regarding the care he should take of himself are strictly obeyed.

For the "Little Napoleon," is a worker and when he is interested in a thing never lets go until he has finished. If he were let he would stay up all night wrestling with municipal problems. But he isn't let—his daughters pack him off to bed, and then write home that he is doing well and obeying orders. Sometimes he protests, but it doesn't do any good. In the end he minds.

Mayor Fitzgerald receives more invitations to attend social functions than any man in Massachusetts. When he goes his daughters go with him. When he went to Europe with the Boston business men on a boosting trip two years ago, the daughters went along and encouraged him when he was perspiring in his attempts to speak German, French, Italian and other languages in which he was supposed to talk.

When he went to Panama later, the daughters went along. Every winter he is at Palm Beach for his vacation, and Rose and Agnes see that he doesn't overtax himself. They show him all the newspaper cartoons and laugh over them with him. They never have cause nowadays to become indignant for three years ago the Boston papers stopped lampooning the Mayor.

Fitzgerald is perhaps the leading citizen of the Bay State today. It is not alone his genial, Irish personality which has effected this, for he is not the type of Irish politician which has ruined New York. He gained his popularity and the real esteem in which he is held through what he has done.

In 1906 Fitzgerald was elected Mayor of Boston for the first time. Previous to that he had served in the City Council and the Massachusetts General Court, as the Legislature is called there, and then went to Congress, where for six years he was the only Democratic representative from New England and one of a very lonesome coterie of free silverites in the capital.

At the close of his administration in 1907—at that time Boston followed the custom of the State in electing the Governor, and voted for the Mayor each year—Fitzgerald was brought into court in an investigation of graft in municipal affairs. Several men were sent to the Workhouse on Deer Island, but Fitzgerald was absolved of all blame.

In 1908, however, when he announced that he would be a candidate the following year, a determined effort was put forth against him. A change in the city government was coming with the adoption of the new Charter, and the Mayor

before, and, incidentally, a salary of \$10,000 a year. It was a rich plum and several men were after it.

The chief opponent of the Mayor was James J. Storrow, a very influential man, rich and powerful, but Fitzgerald was swept into office by one of the largest majorities ever known in a Boston election.

## Wins Over Entire City Within Year.

Inside of a year he had the entire city with him, and in the last four years Boston has made bigger strides than any city in the country. Fitzgerald is interested in every phase of the municipality, from the routine affairs of government to the personal wants of the voters and their wives and children.

Shortly after his election, in outlining his policy, he coined the slogan "BIGGER, BETTER, BUSIER BOSTON," and since that time this phrase has remained the policy of the entire city.

Fitzgerald is better known to his constituents, in all probability, than any mayor of a large city in the world. The people of the slums know him, and crowd around his automobile when he visits their section of the city. He never is too busy to stop and ask some mother about her baby or inquire how some immigrant is succeeding in the little business he has begun, perhaps on the advice of the mayor.

The wealthiest and proudest citizens of the aristocratic Back Bay lunch with Mayor Fitzgerald at the City Club and discuss administration and municipal problems with him. They have instituted what is known as the "round table," where some thirty or forty of them sit at lunch with the Mayor and criticize him to his face, and demand his reasons for whatever action of his fails to win their approval. They then make suggestions as to what they think should be his best course.

Fitzgerald is the man who originated the system of city town meetings. Now the town meeting, a survival of old English customs, is peculiar to New England, and some few of the Central States. Down East no city can be chartered until it can show a census return of at least 25,000 inhabitants. Until then it is known as a town, and is governed by a body of electors, elected by the citizens.

As often as occasion requires the citizens meet in one building, the town hall, and vote on the town's affairs after long discussion in which anyone may take part.

the citizens could meet there.

Fitzgerald attended every meeting, with as many of the councilmen as he could induce to go, and a stenographer. Any citizen who had a grievance or any suggestion to make was free to rise and speak his mind. The civic organizations appointed spokesmen to lay their demands before the Mayor. Every word uttered was taken down by the stenographer and afterwards whipped into shape for consideration before the City Council. The Mayor took an active part in the discussions and pointed out improvements in the suggestions or objections to them, and advised the citizens as to what action they should take.

An immediate awakening of civic pride was the result. Clean-up campaigns were started, the civic bodies redoubled their work, and every man felt that he had an immediate interest in whatever was done in the city, realizing that it might affect his section.

A great institution of the Mayor's was "Mothers' Day," which he started this year. As is common in all of the cities with a section constructed in colonial times, Boston has a slum district. Many of its citizens cannot afford a vacation, and the Mayor felt that the women and children were entitled to at least one day's pleasure. Accordingly he personally telephoned the big business houses of the city and begged contributions of food and drink for them, and threw open one of Boston's big reservations, Franklin Park, for the mothers.

On the appointed day there were nearly 100,000 people at the park, and they remained the whole day. So did the Mayor. He advised the mothers, kissed the babies, played with the children, and enjoyed himself generally. He really does enjoy that sort of thing.

## Fitzgerald Went to Boston a Poor Boy.

Fitzgerald was a poor boy. His people came to Boston with the immense tide of Irish immigration which flowed to the Eastern States about the time of the Civil War, and settled in the old West End, rich in historical reminiscences and the former home of some of the most famous men of American history.

This was in Ward 8 of Boston, and Fitzgerald got his early training under Martin Lomasney, the "Czar of Ward 8," who developed one of the best political machines ever seen in the United States, but who never used it for his own purposes. Lomasney has been in the Massachusetts Legislature longer than he can remember, and each year he is returned by a larger majority than ever.

Fitzgerald early became a spell-binder, and to this day the old men of Ward 8, who refuse to move away, though they have become rich, swear by him. There is an organization called the "Deacons," composed of former residents in that ward, who every year give Fitzgerald a reception and would die for him if need be.

He worked outside of school hours while he was a boy, and studied law later, when he was forced

to seek employment to help pay the family's bills. He has practiced but little, however, as he has been in politics nearly all of his active life.

Fitzgerald is known as the "Singing Mayor," on account of his tendency to carol "Sweet Adeline" at any and all times. He never is allowed to depart from a function in his home city without lifting up his voice, and he has made his favorite song "Boston's Municipal Hymn." A few years ago, when the "Chocolate Soldier" was at its height of popularity, it was suggested that he change to "My Hero," but after trying the high G a few times he concluded that his old standby was much better. On one occasion, when the students of Boston College were holding their annual pop concert night in Symphony Hall, he was discovered in the audience and hoisted to the stage, where he was made to sing "Sweet Adeline" before 8,000 persons. He then made the entire audience rise and led them singing the "Star Spangled Banner." He has a really good voice, too, a clear tenor, which has been slightly strained by open air singing.

Fitzgerald is a little man, and greatly resembles Napoleon, and it is from this that he received his name of "The Little Napoleon." His nickname of "Honey Fitz" he received as a mark of the affection of the Boston citizens have for him. His enemies have called him worse things, but they never bother the happy Mayor. He just smiles and says "It could be worse."

He has a dynamic personality and fairly instills a spirit of work and ambition into everyone who comes into contact with him. He is wildly enthusiastic about whatever plans he happens to be favoring, and never lets up in the fight until he has accomplished his purpose.

For four years he fought for the improvement of Boston Harbor until he succeeded in appropriating \$3,000,000 to be expended in building

up the port's trade. He is heartily in favor of every sort of municipal improvement, once he is convinced that it really is an improvement, and demands the same spirit from every one of his subordinates.

Fitzgerald is a close student of the affairs of the United States. He is confident that at the present time the country is on the verge of a record-breaking period of prosperity, and his advice to all cities is:

"Spend every cent you possibly can to be ready to meet the rush when it comes."

Under his advice Boston is building its improvements to last 50

obtaining 5,000 names to his petition for nomination may be a candidate. There are no caucuses, and such a thing as a Republican or Democratic Central Committee, or ward workers, for the city elections, is virtually unknown and almost forgotten by the younger men. There are no politics in the administration of Boston, it is all a question of personalities, which means actions, and this theory is strongly supported by the Mayor.

The entire working force of the city is under the civil service laws,

which, in fact, control nearly all the government positions in Massachusetts, a few of the higher offices being the exceptions. Fitzgerald never interferes in the least with the selection of the employees. The excise and police questions are entirely out of his jurisdiction, and he says he is glad of it. The schools are out of his jurisdiction, except that, ex-officio, he is a member of the School Board, and he does not interfere in their conduct except where he believes it is vital to the interests of the city.

years. The Mayor insists on the best, and he gets it. The citizens of Boston support him, and whenever he asks for money it is forthcoming. They are confident that if "Honey Fitz" is to have the spending of it the result will justify the expense.

## Sees Prosperity in Panama Canal.

Fitzgerald believes the opening of the Panama Canal will bring an estimable increase of business to the country, and a tremendous influx of population. It is with this view that he is improving Boston Harbor, that he is spending millions of dollars on parks, schools and hospitals. He thinks that the Middle West, the Mississippi Valley, has the greatest opportunity of its history before it now, and that with the correct management it ought to treble its wealth in a decade.

He also follows with interest the development of cities, always searching for some idea which can be applied to his beloved Boston. Under the new Boston charter, which was studied carefully for two years before its introduction in the Legislature and which was fought for two years more before it was passed, Boston has developed one of the most efficient administrations in the country, but Fitzgerald believes there is some room for improvement.

In national politics Fitzgerald is a Democrat, and has been a delegate to the Democratic National conventions several times. In municipal affairs he has no party, and believes that no municipal candidate should be tied to party lines.



Mayor John F. Fitzgerald in individual pose at upper left. At the upper right are Mayor Fitzgerald and his daughters, Agnes at the left and Rose at the right. Below—Agnes Fitzgerald at left and Rose Fitzgerald at right.